

Project Planning with Youth

Project planning with youth often takes longer than the time set aside in Unit 6. Depending on the project youth pick, project planning may be complicated and involve learning a lot of new skills. Both participants and facilitators may need to do things they have not done before. Project planning can then become a collaborative learning environment. Facilitators may need to put in extra work to ensure that this phase of the CE process runs smoothly.

The following lists are a few questions to help facilitators start thinking about the different aspects of project planning.

Before Beginning Project Planning

- ⇒ What sort of role do you see for yourself as a facilitator while youth are project planning? How do you see yourself fitting into and guiding this portion of the process? How are you going to structure planning sessions?
- ⇒ What sort of space will the youth be using for planning purposes? Is there enough room in the space for all of the youth to accomplish their tasks?
- ⇒ How will the groups (or task forces) work together so that all participants are aware of what other groups are doing? How will you ensure that different groups are not duplicating efforts on the same task?
- ⇒ Will your participants have access to the supplies they will need for planning? Supplies could possibly include office equipment such as phones, computers with Internet access, printers and/or copiers, etc. If they do not have easy access to some of the supplies that they may need, how will you work around those limitations?
- ⇒ How will you make sure that the planning process is inclusive? Do you need to make accommodations for any of the youth so they can participate fully (e.g. youth with disabilities, English Language Learners)?
- ⇒ Will youth be doing much work outside of organized CE sessions? If so, how will you check in with them to ensure that they have everything they need to complete their tasks and are making progress?

During Project Planning

- ⇒ How are you guiding youth on making plans and setting agendas to complete tasks? How are you keeping track of what's been completed and what still needs to be done before the project?
- ⇒ How can you guide youth when they're learning something new that you have not done yourself? E.g. If you've never written a press release and the youth want to write one to get media coverage, how will you guide them through learning this skill?
- ⇒ How are you checking in with youth? How are you guiding them through learning the skills they need?

- ⇒ How are you ensuring that groups are working together smoothly? Do you have strategies for resolving conflicts that may arise?
- ⇒ How are you keeping energy and enthusiasm high?

At the Project

- ⇒ Do you have assigned roles and tasks for all participants and facilitators? Does everyone have a clear understanding of their responsibilities before, during, and after the project?
- ⇒ Are there liability and/or legal restrictions to the tasks you or your participants can perform during the project? Some liability or legal restrictions may involve transportation to and from the project, who is legally allowed to handle monetary donations, and what sort of activities youth are allowed to do, e.g. machinery or equipment youth may not be allowed to operate.
- ⇒ Do you have time built into the schedule to meet as a group before the project for a final check-in with participants?
- ⇒ Do you have an assigned "go-to" person for youth to approach if they have questions or issues during the project?
- ⇒ Do you have necessary safety equipment and First Aid supplies at the project site?
- ⇒ Is the project inclusive for all your participants and attendees? Do you need to make accommodations for any participants or attendees?
- ⇒ Do you have time to debrief the project that day?